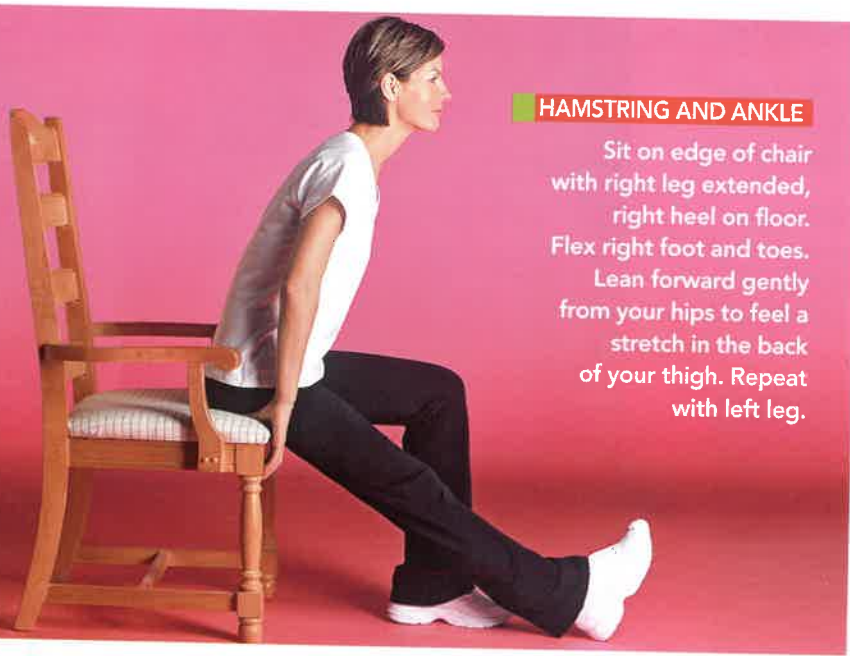


10/12

STRETCHES FOR BEFORE AND AFTER YOU WALK...



HAMSTRING AND ANKLE

Sit on edge of chair with right leg extended, right heel on floor. Flex right foot and toes. Lean forward gently from your hips to feel a stretch in the back of your thigh. Repeat with left leg.

YOU MAY BE EAGER TO GET STARTED ON YOUR WALK – perhaps the weather’s inviting or you have chores to hurry back to – but taking the time to stretch before and after your walk should be a priority.

“Stretching before you walk helps decrease the chance of injury, increases your performance during your walk and decreases muscle soreness after you walk,” says Don Lein, a physical therapist at the University of Alabama’s Spain Rehabilitation Center in Birmingham.

Feel inflexible and unsure how to stretch properly? Start by warming up for a few minutes – try walking slowly and gently swinging your arms – and then follow up by doing these stretches, says Shannon Mescher, an exercise physiologist and Arthritis Foundation consultant. Try to hold each position (rather than bouncing) for 10 to 60 seconds or after you feel a gentle stretch or tension. Hold onto a chair, light pole or other stable object for balance.



CALF STRETCH

Stand up straight, holding onto a chair. Put left leg behind you, keeping left heel on the floor. Bend right knee and lean toward the chair. You should feel the stretch in the calf of the left leg. Repeat with right leg.



GROIN STRETCH

Stand with legs slightly wider than shoulder width and hold onto a chair. With left foot facing forward, point right foot to right 45 degrees then lunge in that direction without letting knee go past toes. Repeat move on left side.



LEG SWINGS

Stand up straight, holding onto a chair with your left hand for support. Standing to the side of the chair on your left leg, move your right leg to the front, side and back, tapping your toe at each point. Repeat with left leg.

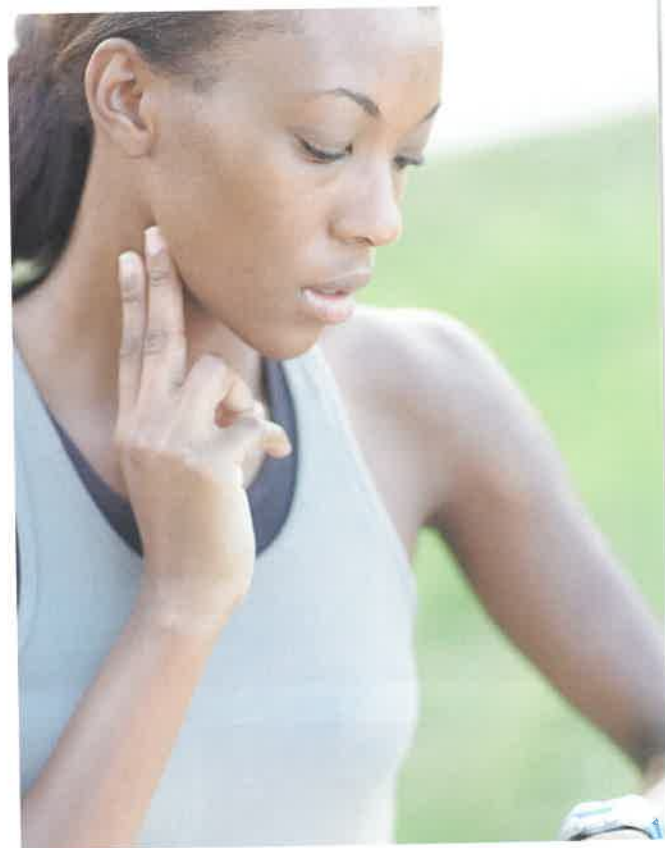
For more great moves to keep your body strong, go to the fitness section of ArthritisToday.com. ←

KEEP THE BEAT

TO ENSURE YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR WALKING PROGRAM, PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BODY'S SIGNALS TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE NOT UNDER- OR OVEREXERTING YOURSELF.

Taking your pulse and using the heart rate scale is the most accurate way to measure your aerobic intensity. By finding out what your target heart rate is, you ensure that you are working at a safe and effective level for you.

Moderate aerobic intensity – the kind of walking that is recommended for health and fitness – should raise your heart rate into a range between 60 and 75 percent of your maximum heart rate. This range is called your “target heart rate” and is what is the recommended level for walking for most people with arthritis.



← [Use this scale to find your target heart rate.]

TARGET HEART RATE SCALE

| Age | Max Heart Rate | One Minute Count | | 10-Second Count | |
|-------|----------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | | 60% of max | 75% of max | 60% of max | 75% of max |
| 20-24 | 200 | 120 | 150 | 20 | 25 |
| 25-29 | 195 | 117 | 146 | 19 | 24 |
| 30-34 | 190 | 114 | 142 | 19 | 24 |
| 35-39 | 185 | 111 | 139 | 18 | 23 |
| 40-44 | 180 | 108 | 135 | 18 | 22 |
| 45-49 | 175 | 105 | 131 | 17 | 22 |
| 50-54 | 170 | 102 | 127 | 17 | 21 |
| 55-59 | 165 | 99 | 124 | 16 | 21 |
| 60-64 | 160 | 96 | 120 | 16 | 20 |
| 65-69 | 155 | 93 | 116 | 15 | 19 |
| 70-74 | 150 | 90 | 112 | 15 | 19 |
| 75+ | 145 | 87 | 108 | 14 | 18 |

tips for safety

The Talk Test

This is an easy way to determine if you are over-exerting yourself. Simply talk out loud to another person or to yourself, sing or recite a verse of a poem or song lyric while you walk. If you can't speak comfortably without huffing and puffing, then you are working too hard. Slow down!

Over time, you'll find you can exert yourself harder and for longer durations and still be able to talk comfortably. That's an easy way to measure your progress, too.

The Two-Hour Pain Rule

If you have more pain two hours after you finish walking than before you started, then you have overdone it. Cut back until you find a level that does not cause more pain two hours after you finish.

How To Take Your Pulse

- A few minutes into your walk, take your pulse. Place the pads of your middle two or three fingers on your wrist just below the base of your thumb.
- Once you feel the “thumping” of your heart beat, check your watch or timer and count the number of beats you feel for 10 seconds. Begin your count with zero for the first beat.
- Multiply your number of heart beats by 6 to find your beats per minute.
- Your number should fall within the 60 to 75 percent range for your age level on the Target Heart Rate Scale. If your number is too high, you are exercising too intensely. Slow down. If your number is too low and you feel OK, you can work harder.